REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-43 are presently active in this case. The present Amendment amends Claims 1, 13, 17, 21, 25-30, 33-34, and 37 without introducing any new matter.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-43 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Rangan et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,493,872, hereinafter "Rangan") in view of Bruck et al. (U.S. Patent No. 7,143,428, hereinafter "Bruck").

In response, independent Claim 1 is amended to clarify that the "the related information [is] including an identification of the contents, user remarks to the contents, and a reference time position of the user remarks relating to the contents." These features find non-limiting support in Applicants' disclosure as originally filed, for example in Figure 2, reference numerals 203 and 204, and in the specification at p. 25, ll. 5-19. Moreover, Claim 1 is also amended to recite that "the reference information [is] including a keyword specifying contents to be referred to by the user remarks to the contents, and specifying a time reference position in the contents." These features find non-limiting support in Fig. 4, reference numerals 402 and 406, and in the specification from p. 27, l. 11, to p. 28, l. 14.

In addition, independent Claim 1 is amended to recite an "information retrieving means that searches the related information storing means for matching related information that matches at least one of the keyword or the time reference position of the reference information from the reference information receiving means, and transmits the matching related information for displaying on a display at a specific user device." These features find non-limiting support, for example in Figs. 1 and 5, steps S8 and S9, and in the specification at p. 22, ll. 11-20, p. 23, ll. 4-16, and p. 28, ll. 15-25. No new matter has been added.

Moreover, independent Claims 13, 17 and 21 have been amended to recite analogous features in the respective claim language directed to the different statutory classes, and dependent Claims 25-30, 33-34 and 37 are amended to correspond to the changes of independent Claim 21. No new matter has been added.

In response to the rejection of Claims 1-43 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), in light of the amendments to the independent claims, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection and traverse the rejection, as discussed next.

Briefly summarizing, independent Claim 21 is directed to a bulletin board system that supports information exchange for contents including reference data arranged in time series. The system includes, *inter alia* a related information receiver configured to receive related information from one or more user devices, *the related information including an identification of the contents, user remarks to the contents, and a reference time position of the user remarks relating to the contents*, a reference information receiver configured to receive reference information from the one or more user devices, *the reference information including a keyword specifying contents to be referred to by the user remarks to the contents, and specifying a time reference position in the contents*.

In addition, the system includes an information processing unit *configured to search a related information storing unit for matching related information that matches at least one of the keyword or the time reference position of the reference information from the reference information receiver*, and transmit the matching related information for displaying on a display at a specific user device from among the one or more user devices, and to transmit at least one of the matching related information or the stored reference information to the one or more user devices.

As explained in Applicants' specification in a non-limiting example, the features of Applicants' Claim 1 allow users to annotate contents with user information, for example to

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make remarks on different episodes of a television series broadcast. The user information

can include user remarks, a contribution date of the remarks, and a time reference position of

the remarks, and these entries can be made by using a bulletin board. (See Figs. 2 and 3.)

Next, the user can also search for contents and remarks previously made by other users based

on keywords and a time period when the remarks were made. (See Fig. 4.) Information on

contents that match the search criteria and the contents itself can then be sent to the user's

device. (See Fig. 5, step S9). Please note that the above discussion is for explanatory

purposes only, and is not intended to limit the scope of the claims in any fashion.

Turning now to the applied references, Rangan is directed to a method of synchronous

presentation of video and audio transmissions and their interactive enhancement for TV and

internet environments, where special meta data can be inserted to a media stream. (Rangan,

Abstract.) In particular, Rangan explains that a media stream can be enhanced by tracking

objects in the video data stream, such as a so that advertisements can be linked to the tracked

objects. (Rangan, col. 5, l. 64, to col. 6, l. 16.) Rangan uses a tracking module 13 that uses a

powerful processor to generate tracking coordinates of objects by image processing

algorithms. (Rangan, col. 6, l. 51, to col. 7. l. 32.)

However, Rangan fails to teach all the features of Applicants' Claim 21. In particular,

the cited passages of Rangan fails to teach:

> a reference information receiver configured to receive reference
> information ... *including a keyword specifying contents to be referred to by*
> *the user remarks to the contents, and specifying a time reference position in*
> *the contents* ...
> an information processing unit configured *to search the related*
> *information storing unit for matching related information that matches at*
> *least one of the keyword or the time reference position* of the reference
> information from the reference information receiver.

(Claim 21, portions omitted, emphasis added.) In the cited passages of Rangan, there is no

receiver configured to receive keywords specifying contents to search for remarks of users,

because in <u>Rangan</u>, the annotation stream merely includes coordinates to track objects in a video stream, and annotation regarding the tracked entities. (<u>Rangan</u>, col. 14, ll. 23-35, Fig. 8.) In addition, <u>Rangan</u> fails to teach an information processing unit to search the related information storing unit for matching related information that matches at least one of the keyword or the time reference position of the reference information, as required by Applicants' Claim 21.

The reference <u>Bruck</u>, used by the pending Office Action to form the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection, fails to remedy the deficiencies of <u>Rangan</u>, even if we assume that the combination is proper. <u>Bruck</u> is directed to a system having a graphical user interface 110, where a video signal can be displayed in a video region 118 together with a chat region 108 for a transcript of text messages. (<u>Bruck</u>, Abstract, Fig. 6). <u>Bruck</u> explains that the chat room for the displayed chat region 108 can be linked to a particular TV show that is being broadcasted. (<u>Bruck</u>, col. 7, ll. 27-35.)

However, the cited passages of <u>Bruck</u>, there is no receiver configured to receive keywords specifying contents to search for remarks of users, because in <u>Bruck</u>, the chat messages are not used for any search purposes, but merely a chat transcript can be generated. (<u>Bruck</u>, col. 7, ll. 30-35, Figs. 5-11.) In addition, <u>Bruck</u> fails to teach an information processing unit to search the related information storing unit for matching related information that matches at least one of the keyword or the time reference position of the reference information, as required by Applicants' Claim 21. The cited passages of <u>Bruck</u> are silent on such a feature.

Therefore, the cited passages of the applied references <u>Rangan</u> and <u>Bruck</u>, taken in any proper combination, fail to teach every feature recited in Applicants' Claim 21, so that Claims 22-43 are believed to be patentably distinct over <u>Rangan</u> and <u>Bruck</u>. Accordingly,

Applicants respectfully traverse, and request reconsideration of the rejection based on these

references.

Independent Claims 1, 13, and 17 recite features that are analogous to the features

recited in independent Claim 21, albeit directed to different statutory classes. Accordingly,

for the reasons stated above for the patentability of Claim 21, Applicants respectfully submit

that the rejections of Claims 1, 13, and 17 and the rejections of all associated dependent

claims, are also believed to be overcome in view of the arguments regarding independent

Claim 21.

Moreover, Applicants respectfully submit that <u>Rangan</u> and <u>Bruck</u>, taken in any proper

combination, fail to teach every feature recited in Applicants' dependent claims. For

example, dependent Claim 22 requires means that specifies an installation region of a

terminal apparatus and, means that changes contents of reference information according to

the specified installation region. The pending Office Action rejects these features based on

the reference <u>Rangan</u> at columns 17-18. Applicants respectfully disagree with this assertion,

because in these passages, <u>Rangan</u> merely explains that a time marker 99 can annotate the

annotation stream 95 and the video stream 93 with time marks, so that they can be easier

matched on a time axis. (<u>Rangan</u>, col. 18, ll. 20-34, Fig. 10, "marker generator 99") Nowhere

<u>Rangan</u> explains that the contents of reference information is changed according to the

specified installation region, as required by Applicants' dependent Claim 22. Therefore,

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections of Applicants' dependent claims.

The present amendment is submitted in accordance with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §

1.116, which after Final Rejection permits entry of amendments placing the claims in better

form for consideration on appeal. As the present amendment is believed to overcome

outstanding rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), the present amendment places the

application in better form for consideration on appeal. In addition, the present amendment is

not believed to raise new issues because the changes to Claims 1, 13, 17, 21, 25-30, 33-34, and 37 are merely clarifying some features. It is therefore respectfully requested that 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 be liberally construed, and that the present amendment be entered.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal Allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 1-43 is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

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